



**Testimony before the House Health and Government Operations Committee**

**\*\*Support\*\***

**HB 551 –**

**Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance – Coverage and Reimbursement of Telehealth Services**

**February 10, 2021**

Maryland’s Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW-MD), which represents professional social workers across the state, supports HB 551 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance – Coverage and Reimbursement of Telehealth Services.

The past year has been remarkable for the challenges and stresses which all Marylanders have faced as we have struggled with the health and financial aspects of COVID 19. Social workers provide more mental health services in our country than any other profession and social workers in Maryland have risen to the challenge and pivoted to continue providing quality mental health services while keeping themselves and their clients safe through the use of Telehealth. The process has taught us that telehealth is a vital form of providing care to clients who for one reason or another cannot access a practitioner in person.

This option must continue to be available during the rest of the public health emergency and beyond.

We support any legislation which makes telehealth accessible to more Maryland residents.

**We ask that you give a favorable report on HB 551.**

Respectfully,

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Executive Director, NASW-MD